

**HILDA L. SOLIS**

32ND DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON  
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

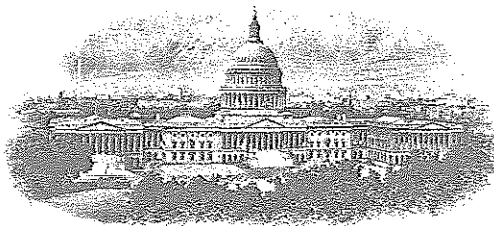
SUBCOMMITTEES:

VICE CHAIR, ENVIRONMENT AND  
HAZARDOUS MATERIALS  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND THE INTERNET  
HEALTH

COMMITTEE ON  
NATURAL RESOURCES

SUBCOMMITTEES:

WATER AND POWER  
ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES  
CHAIR, CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC  
CAUCUS TASK FORCE ON HEALTH  
AND ENVIRONMENT  
VICE CHAIR, DEMOCRATIC  
STEERING AND POLICY COMMITTEE



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 3, 2007

1414 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-5464  
FAX: (202) 225-5467

4401 SANTA ANITA AVENUE  
SUITE 211  
EL MONTE, CA 91731  
(626) 448-1271  
FAX: (626) 448-8062

4716 CESAR CHAVEZ AVENUE  
BUILDING A  
EAST LOS ANGELES, CA 90022  
(323) 307-9904  
FAX: (323) 307-9906

website: [www.house.gov/solis](http://www.house.gov/solis)

The Honorable George Miller  
Chairman, House Committee on Education and Labor  
2181 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Miller:

This past spring I hosted a forum in my district to discuss education issues, most notably the upcoming reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. More than 100 people attended, including numerous school superintendents, board of education members, teachers, education advocates and parents. I am writing to share the feedback I received at the forum and to encourage you to keep these concerns in mind as the House Education and Labor Committee considers the reauthorization of NCLB.

As background, the 32<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District includes parts of East Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Valley. Sixty two percent of the residents are Latino and twenty percent are Asian. It is a working class community where 24% of children under 18 live below the poverty level. Seventy-two percent of families in my Congressional district speak a language other than English at home and 25 percent of Spanish speakers are between the ages of five and 17. Many schools in my district are Title I schools.

It should come as no surprise to you that the most mentioned frustration expressed by local school officials was the lack of federal support and resources. Meeting federal and state standards set by NCLB, while also fulfilling other requirements, is costly and challenging, especially for school districts like those in my community which have concentrated poverty and hard-to-staff schools. These school districts rely heavily on these federal supplemental funds.

Local school officials also informed me that Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements are a significant challenge for them because they fail to accurately measure a student's ability and a school's progress. Rather than rely on test scores alone, they suggested utilizing growth models, which recognize that schools and pupils have different starting points in their achievement levels. Also, school representatives in my district feel strongly that those schools which have made great improvements, but have yet to reach AYP requirements, should not be

punished and that progress by these schools to improve student achievement should be recognized.

In addition, serious concerns were raised about the negative consequences of NCLB's requirements for English Language Learners (ELL). Local advocates feel strongly that NCLB should recognize the unique process and timeline for ELL progress and include guidance on ELL assessment which would consider educational levels of individual students by various subject areas.

Finally, attendees at the forum expressed support for including language in NCLB to encourage parent participation and the creation of school-community partnerships. These partnerships must be culturally and linguistically appropriate, particularly in under-represented and minority communities where many parents are limited English proficient.

I sincerely appreciate the efforts of you and your staff to date to communicate with Members about the reauthorization of NCLB. As the NCLB reauthorization moves forward, I hope you will keep in mind the unique needs and challenges of communities such as those that I represent. Under your leadership I am certain we can ensure that struggling schools close the achievement gap and all students succeed in academics.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Eleonor Velasquez of my staff at x55464.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Hilda L. Solis", written in a cursive style.

HILDA L. SOLIS  
Member of Congress

HLS: ev